

The Critic

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The Daily Press.

A FEW days ago one of the great newspapers, congratulating itself with characteristic journalistic modesty upon the variety and extent of the information contained in its columns, remarked that the majority of the population depended solely upon the daily press for their literature and general learning, and could acquire by this means a liberal education. The statement was, of course, a ridiculous exaggeration so far as the result is concerned, but has some foundation in fact. The age is so busy and the competition in all methods of money-getting so keen, that comparatively few persons outside the learned and polite professions can find much time to devote to the study of books, and the great mass of bread-winners turn eagerly to the newspapers, which provide an easy summary of what is going on the world over, accompanied by editorial comments of more or less sagacity, which naturally exert a great influence upon popular—that is, uneducated—opinion. But no one supposes that the vast amount of ill-digested matter poured almost uninterruptedly from daily and nightly presses could, even under the most favorable conditions, have the effect of education. The newspaper deals primarily with facts of which the significance and application are left to the intellectual resources of the reader. In other words, it gives premises from which each man may draw his own conclusions. The very variety of topics superficially treated leads to confusion of thought, and by constant diversion of the perceptive faculties induces and encourages a sort of mental dissipation which is directly opposed to every true principle of education. It need scarcely be added that this remark is not intended to apply to those few columns set apart for artistic, literary or scientific matters, which are generally harmless, if they are not always instructive.

But if the newspaper is debarred by the multiplicity of its topics from exercising the functions of a teacher, it undoubtedly possesses great power for good, and a most tremendous capacity for evil. It might almost be said that it furnishes millions of people daily with their chief subjects of conversation. The briefest paragraph can set men's tongues wagging from one end of the continent to the other. This is the tritest of statements, but the significance of it, and the relation which it bears to social morality, is not as fully appreciated as it ought to be. Everybody realizes the might of the press when its resources are used for the correction of abuses, the exposure of fraud, the succor of the distressed, the support of political candidates, and other legitimate or praiseworthy purposes, but comparatively few persons reflect that this power must be at least equally efficacious when employed for the dissemination of evil. It is indeed more potent for evil than good, as the natural tendency of human nature is downward, and the baser instincts are those which seek their gratification most greedily.

It is plain that the editors of the daily press practically select the topics which their readers shall either discuss or

think about. They can decide whether those topics shall be morally healthful or pestilential. They cannot say that their course in this respect must be governed by the news of the day. It is scarcely conceivable that there could ever be any event of public importance whose publication could be hurtful to morality. Nobody's moral nature was ever harmed by the study of history. Those events, moreover, which are of the greatest general importance are also likely to be of the greatest general interest, the very matters which a genuine newspaper would be most eager to publish. This was once the guiding principle of journalism; but of late the great morning dailies have apparently lost, not only their former power of discrimination, but their sense of right and wrong. The extraordinary disproportion constantly existing between the importance of a topic and the space devoted to it, must strike every newspaper reader of ordinary intelligence. It is not so much that graver subjects are altogether neglected, as that frivolous, stupid or objectionable themes are thrust into absurd prominence, by the side of affairs of weightiest moment. This deplorable tendency is observable even in such expensive luxuries as cable despatches—not the sham messages manifestly concocted in this city, but those which bear internal evidence of genuineness, and which cost money. Most of the foreign correspondents are absolutely ignorant of the conditions bearing upon the facts which they scribble about so glibly. They content themselves with collecting and forwarding all the idle gossip of the local press, and with contradicting tomorrow the stories sent to-day. The way in which some of them have floundered amid the puzzling and varying phases of the present European crisis would be ridiculous if it were not lamentable. And there seems to be no one at this end of the cable to straighten out the blunders and contradictions. Even those correspondents whose ability is undoubted do not hesitate to degrade their calling by reporting childish or indecent gossip, and by advertising all kinds of social, artistic and literary impostors. A cable despatch in a New York newspaper often reads like a page from a London society journal—the emptiest and most contemptible of periodical publications. In the treatment of domestic news, the same want of proportion, the same downward tendency is observable. The space occupied by trivialities and indecencies is preposterous. Whole columns are devoted to the vulgar horrors of the police court, the sayings and doings of prize-fighters, the junketings of the lowest order of politicians, the drunken frolics of some worthless broker, the adventures of a miserable variety actress, the elopement of a stableman, dog-fights, cock-fights and every other kind of low vice and profligacy. And day by day the offence grows ranker. Only a short time ago no newspaper with the slightest pretence to respectability would have dared to print a line of the impurity with which, in these later days, whole pages are defiled. The editors have even crossed the sea in search of abominations greater than any yet exposed in our own courts of justice, and have published the details here, poisoning the moral atmosphere of the whole country. Many a wretch has been sent to gaol for selling literature no more filthy and far less dangerous. The motive in both cases is the same—the greed of money.

This deterioration is not confined, of course, to any one department of a journal which is once affected by it. Corruption, in this case, comes from the head, and the offences of the news columns are but natural results of the weakness and inconsistencies of the editorial page. In the place of the honest principle, strong conviction and sturdy purpose which once inspired the writings of leading journalists, we now find personal spites and jealousies, the meanest sort of political rancour, insincere and cowardly treatment of great questions in which diverse interests are concerned, and a disgraceful willingness to sacrifice principle to profit. It is no longer possible to hope that this journalistic degradation is temporary or accidental. Every indication, including the

cowardly and dangerous treatment of the labor question, points to a deliberate determination to secure large circulation at all costs, even by pandering to the depravity of the lower and more numerous classes. Instead of attempting to set a higher standard of public taste, the newspapers have resolved to make what profit they can by lowering themselves to the level of the lowest taste that exists. The policy is as foolish as it is disgraceful. Circulation is not the measure of a newspaper's prosperity, as they will discover when they have alienated the support of intelligent and refined readers. The cultivated classes are now looking for newspapers which can be taken into their homes.

Reviews

Baird's "Huguenots and Henry of Navarre."*

PROF. BAIRD's former work, the 'History of the Rise of the Huguenots of France,' traced the progress of the Reformation in that kingdom from its beginning to the close of the reign of Charles IX. At that period, the Protestant party was recovering from the effects of the stunning blow inflicted by the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and had again become an important power in the state. The author now continues the history, and shows the advance of the party, under various difficulties and through many vicissitudes, to a position, if not of actual triumph, at least of prosperity and apparent security, under the protection of the Edict of Nantes. A certain dramatic unity is given to this portion of the history by the fact that it has a hero for its leading character—not a perfect one, by any means, but made, perhaps, more interesting by his very defects. Henry of Navarre is too well known, in the fierce light which has beaten upon his memory for nearly three centuries, to require any new characterization. Such as we have long been accustomed to regard him, he reappears in Prof. Baird's spirited narrative. The author's careful researches have unearthed some new evidence, and have placed some well-known facts in a novel light. But the main outlines of Henry's character and career remain unaltered. Chivalrous, brave, generous, often magnanimous, he was; at the same time lax in morals, fickle in his attachments, imbued with an inordinate sense of his own rank and claims, and willing to sacrifice not only his religious convictions, but his best friends and the well-being of his people, to the gratification of his selfish ambition. His character has shone brighter from its contrast with the evil traits of his chief opponents—the contemptible Henry III., his detestable mother, Catherine de Medicis, and the crafty and cruel Guises, the 'brood of false Lorraine.' All these personages, and many others equally notable, play their parts in these volumes, and lend animation to the narrative. The author has neglected no authority which was likely to cast light upon the events he records; and he has given us what may doubtless be accepted as the most authentic summary yet published of a portion of the history of France interesting to most readers, and especially so to the descendants of Huguenots in all parts of the world.

The only defect of any consequence to be noted in the work is one which does not detract from its interest as a narrative, but seriously affects its value as a history—that is, if we accept the well-known definition of history as philosophy teaching by example. The author fails in the analysis of causes. He treats the civil conflicts which he describes as purely religious wars, whereas it is evident from the facts which he records—more evident perhaps than in any previous history—that they were mainly political, and that religion was little more than a pretext. Henry III. and Henry of Navarre, though at the opposite poles of religion, found themselves compelled into companionship and alliance at the last, because they were the natural leaders of the higher classes against an uprising of the lower orders.

* The Huguenots and Henry of Navarre. By Henry N. Baird. With maps. 2 vols. \$5. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Henry III. represented the Frankish nobles of the north, selfish, frivolous, domineering, and exacting. Henry of Navarre stood for the great landowners and wealthy burgesses of the Latin south. Against the oppression of these lordly classes, the miserable Celtic peasantry and the despised artisans of the towns sought to make headway by raising an outcry for the old religion, and enlisting under the banners of the factious and ambitious Leaguers. That the Parisian populace could really have doubted the religious zeal of Henry III., whose fanatical hatred of the Reformation was notorious and unchanged from St. Bartholomew to his dying day, cannot be believed. But they knew that he and his nobles contemned the common people, and regarded them as beasts of burden created for their benefit. They believed (and, as the event showed, with too much truth) that Henry IV. and his associates had the same sentiments; and they consequently fought against both the kings, Catholic and Protestant, with equal desperation. For the time they were conquered. Their subjection and misery lasted for two centuries longer, and then at length their turn of triumph came. The ferocious and atheistic Paris of the Reign of Terror in 1794 was just as religious as the ferocious and fanatical Paris of the Siege of 1590. That is, religious motives counted just as little in the one case as in the other. Unless we learn to look beneath the surface, and discern the opposition of classes, which usually, if not always, lurks at the bottom of every civil war, we may find in history a series of interesting tales, but shall gain from it little useful instruction.

Lincoln's Every-Day Life.*

THE life of Abraham Lincoln offers a most tempting subject to the biographer, both on account of its singular and engaging features and the extraordinary circumstances of its setting. A great deal has been written about it and eagerly read, and the avidity with which the painstaking and scholarly work by Hay and Nicolay is received, shows the perpetual freshness of the theme and the abiding popular interest in it. Unlike that biography and all others of Mr. Lincoln, is the one produced by Mr. Francis F. Browne, editor of the Chicago *Dial*, entitled 'The Every-Day Life of Abraham Lincoln.' The scheme of Mr. Browne's unique work was to bring together all personal information that could be obtained directly from Mr. Lincoln's intimate associates which could illustrate and interpret his life and character. For this purpose the author was for many years in correspondence with Lincoln's friends and acquaintances—a very large circle—who furnished a mass of desirable material the most of which has never before been published. From this treasury of reminiscence, anecdote, descriptive traits and scenes, Mr. Browne has compiled, with great labor and a fine sense of fitness and proportion, this large octavo volume which has a value of its own. Other biographies have been slightly drawn on, to fill up certain gaps in the narrative, whose continuity has been kept up by the author where explanation or interpretation was required; but what Mr. Browne has succeeded with peculiar felicity in doing, is to make these varied, rich, suggestive, often picturesque accounts by those who knew Mr. Lincoln from his childhood to his death, tell their own story—to make up the true portraiture of the man. And the picture that comes out of the concurring testimony of so many witnesses, that shows him in so many attitudes, circumstances, and situations, revealing all sides of his nature and the spirit that was in him, is one of wonderful fascination and power. One reads on with a sense of intimacy with the subject that cannot come from any mere delineations of a deliberate biographer. There is no escaping the vivid impression which these life-scenes make of Lincoln's marvellous personality—his inherent nobility, tender humanity, sacrificial spirit; his gen-

* The Every-Day Life of Abraham Lincoln. By Those Who Knew Him. Edited by F. F. Browne. Published by Subscription. New York and St. Louis: N. D. Thompson Publishing Co.

tleness, wisdom, patient sufferings, profound intuitions; his genius for statesmanship, his heroic temper and his intense patriotism. No other Life of Lincoln, however faithful in delineation of his services and surroundings or admirable in literary execution, can take just the place filled by this curious and unique volume.

"A Study of Mexico."*

It is the custom nowadays for railway companies and land-improvement companies to call in prophets to bless their real-estate investments and, generally, to give things a good start in their promised lands. When thus employed the prophets are not left to wander around alone on donkey-back—and so exposed to the possibilities of diversion from their destined purpose by a chance encounter with, and the combined arguments of, an ass and an angel. On the contrary, the prophet is taken in hand by the officers of the corporation, and is carried luxuriously through the region that he is to bless in a private car. Under these conditions the blessing, bestowed through the medium of 'booming' letters in the newspaper press, usually can be counted upon with certainty.

Mr. David A. Wells, however, appears to be a prophet of this sort who has missed fire. He was taken into Mexico in the regulation private car, and seems to have been 'treated well' (as a railroad person would express it) in every particular; and yet, instead of blessing Mexico, he apparently has come most uncomfortably close to cursing it. His book, indeed, is refreshing in that it is so very unlike the other books about Mexico published in the last four or five years, since the American railway invasion began; for almost all of these have been written under the inspiration, if not of a private car, at least of free passes. What is not satisfactory about Mr. Wells's utterances is, that in his desire to be, or to appear to be, entirely unbiassed he frequently goes to the extreme of being unjust; and that because of his entire ignorance of Mexico until his actual entry into the country, he makes many errors in his assumptions of fact. His general attitude is that of a hard-headed, shrewd man-of-business, whose knowledge of Mexican history is infinitesimal, who is absolutely devoid of romance, and whose mental and moral training has been such as to confine his sympathies within very narrow bounds. Naturally, his conceptions of what he sees and hears frequently are erroneous and also frequently are unfair. Being on the lookout for unpleasant features of the country and its people, he finds unpleasant features in abundance; and he misses many good qualities in both people and country because he does not care to find them, or because he does not know how, or where, to look for them.

On the other hand, Mr. Wells manifests an affection for the country as a whole that certainly is not the legitimate outcome of his feeling for its people, customs and institutions in detail. He even propounds, with every appearance of seriousness, a scheme for funding the Mexican debt with payment of interest guaranteed by the United States Government! In support of this extraordinary financial operation, he urges that by supplying the existing Mexican Government yearly with the \$1,800,000 to \$2,225,000 that he estimates would be required ('less than what is almost annually wasted on river and harbor improvements that subserve only private interests,' as he observes), the actual revenue of Mexico then would be sufficient to assure the maintenance of order in the Republic and, consequently, the protection of holders of Mexican securities. Incidentally, also, this arrangement, he believes, would render unnecessary (by making revolution impossible) any expenditure on the part of the United States in maintaining order in northern Mexico in the event of a serious revolution breaking out in that region. That this notable project is not urged purely as a matter of American self-interest

is shown by his further suggestions that we shall manifest our good will toward Mexico by returning the battle flags and cannon captured during the war of 1847, and that individual Americans shall do all in their power to win the friendship of individual Mexicans—which latter suggestion unquestionably is a very good one indeed.

Notwithstanding its errors and eccentricities, Mr. Wells's book—as an American business man's study of the business methods and economic conditions of Mexico—is both interesting and valuable. It presents intelligently, though sometimes too forcibly, the difficulties with which Americans doing business in Mexico must contend; and it explains, in part at least, why the American-built railroads have not as yet realized the predictions of their sanguine projectors. And, unpleasant though many of his statements certainly are, they are not by any means the statements of a mere pessimist. He seems to be moved by a sincere desire to unite more closely the business and general interests of the two republics; and he obviously holds, with reason, that the best way to begin to bring about this union is to arrive at a clear understanding of what at present stands in its way. Unquestionably, he would have made a better book had he divested himself more completely of race prejudice; and had he confined himself to the economic matters that he understands very well, instead of trying to handle matters of sociology and history that he does not understand at all. By his numerous erroneous statements of facts in points quite aside from the real purpose of his book, and by his impracticable suggestions in regard to the financial relations of the two governments, he has placed himself in a false position that, in interested quarters, certainly will be made the most of to weaken the effect of that portion of his work which cannot be either denied or argued down. Divested, however, of its unessential errors and eccentricities, his 'Study of Mexico' is a book that sheds much wholesome light upon the existing commercial and political relations of Mexico and the United States.

"The Princess Casamassima."*

THE naming of novels is certainly a mystery beyond fathoming. Like the doorplate on a fashionable door in a fashionable street, the name of a novel either signifies nothing, or in a vague, incomprehensive way, indicates that So-and-So lives here—So-and-So being often a very multitudinous individual. Even so it is with Henry James's last accomplishment in the realm of fiction, full of rare figures as it is. The reader traverses 134 pages—close, compact, unparagraphed—a snarl of interminable analysis,—before the 'Princess Casamassima,' of whom the book is an eponym, comes to the light, lost as she is, so to speak, in the windings of a palatial labyrinth. When she does emerge, she is found not to be the heroine of the superscription. The doorplate is treacherous: 'Mr. Hyacinth Robinson lives here' (like the 'Ici on parle Anglais' of a Parisian shop-window), is the discovery which the puzzled reader makes soon after opening the door, or beginning the book; and if Hyacinth is first, so Hyacinth is last in the affections of the author, and the 'Princess' is a mere foil, a fringe, an embellishment to this rare and charming young man. And if this peculiarity is puzzling in the volume, as we have it complete, it was infinitely more so in serial form, as it meandered through the monthly coils of *The Atlantic*. And to the serial form, no less than to the essential inconsequence and inconclusiveness of the *denouement*, is due the failure of this socialistic drama, endlessly delightful as it is to the lover of interpretations, of emotions analytically examined, of hairs radiantly split, of spectroscopic gratings capable of dividing a ray of light into 32,000 lines to the square inch, or of intellectual engines describing 150,000 sensations to the twenty pages. For to this serial form is due

* A Study of Mexico. By David A. Wells. \$1. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

* The Princess Casamassima. By Henry James. \$1.75. New York: Macmillan & Co.

the jerkiness of the narrative, the obligation to make each chapter or book end with a snap or a sensation, to keep the interest of the reader alive till the next instalment. This artistic fault comes out rather glaringly when the book is read in continuous form, and one is successively bumped up and down, at regular intervals, by successive sensational incidents. Apart from these defects, 'The Princess Casamassima' is an entrancing bundle of emotions and conversations, of eccentric freaks of the analytical imagination, of London people 'done to a turn' and conspirators realistically handled. Hyacinth Robinson is a *mosca bianca*, as the Italians say: a poetic and exquisite manikin placed in brilliant juxtaposition to the splendid and eccentric Princess and the livid knot of socialist assassins who breed and hiss in the out-of-the-way corners of the book. On him the author has exhausted his most loving delineation: if there is a line of him, soul and body, however microscopically small, that he does not describe and spin out to an infinity of fine gold threads, we have missed the purpose of the book; while Paul Muniment and his bedridden sister, Lady Aurora and Madame Grandone, Pinnie and the Ponpins are minute bits of realism as luminous and distinct as the microscopic specs which enter into a piece of Florentine mosaic. In this book Mr. James apparently bids definitive farewell to America, for the only hint of *la misère transatlantique* is the single concession that the mother of the Princess was an American. The book is quite characteristically British in its slang, its diction, its allusions, its evident holding of the eye on the 'h'aristocracy.'

"Katy of Catoctin."*

ONE looks at the outside of this bulky novel with mixed emotions—a faint hope that it may contain some of the good work which redeemed the poor in 'The Entailed Hat,' a great fear that it will contain much of the coarseness which disfigures all of Gath's writings, and a strong conviction that, whether good or bad, the story will prove very much too long. That there is a great deal in the book which is strong, dramatic, pathetic and intensely interesting will be accepted without question, upon hearing that this 'national romance' rehearses the story of John Brown, Abraham Lincoln, and John Wilkes Booth; but the labelling of such a tragic national romance with the foolish 'Katy' title affords a clew to the lack of taste and artistic judgment shown in the writing of the book. The length of Cleopatra's nose may have affected the history of the world, and love for simpler women may have had its influence upon heroes who have moulded the world's fortunes; but Katy of Catoctin had nothing to do with John Brown's heroism or John Wilkes Booth's treachery. Many a novelist might jump at the dramatic opportunity afforded by such national events; but a little reflection would be apt to show that the dramatic element of the story would be pure fact, to which no novelist could add anything of importance. It would hardly be possible to enhance the interest of such a story as that of this period of American history. To Gath's credit be it said that he has realized this, and clung to historic facts in his most dramatic episodes; for even the pitiful craving of the assassin Booth to die by a fire, and his risking life itself for shelter and a cup of hot coffee, are matters of undisputed record. The fictitious part of Gath's romance is the story of Katy, which is not a remarkable one, nor a very interesting one, even though the man above her in social station who loved and married her happened to be shut up with John Brown on that awful night in Harper's Ferry, and to look upon other eventful deeds and historic characters. The best of Gath's romance being thus matters of history, and the poorest hardly worth the effort of imagining, 'Katy of Catoctin' can hardly be said to fill a want in either history or fiction. Perhaps the most inter-

esting episode in it, read in the light of after events, is the description of an interview between Wilkes Booth and John Brown.

Minor Notices.

FRANK S. THAYER, of Denver, has just brought out an *édition de luxe*, with proofs on India-paper, of his illustrated 'Tribute in Memory of Helen Hunt Jackson,' recently noticed in these columns. It is limited to one hundred numbered copies.—'HOME-LIFE OF GREAT AUTHORS,' by Hattie Tyng Griswold (A. C. McClurg & Co.), does not claim to give many new facts to the students of literary biography, but simply to give in separate form what usually makes only a part of biography. Over thirty prominent authors, from Goethe to Ruskin, including many Americans, are treated, and the book is pleasant and profitable reading.—'HOW?' by Kennedy Holbrook (Worthington), is a capital book with practical directions for making spare hours profitable to boys and girls; or, what is better, enabling the boys and girls themselves to make them profitable. It contains minute directions for making a host of little toys and puzzles, with helpful hints about *repoussé* work, photographic printing, glass-blowing, electrical experiments, and other occupations amusing and instructive. The volume is illustrated.

MISS JULIET CORSON is so well known for her admirable efforts in improving American housekeeping, that a new book by her need only be announced to be sure of a welcome. 'Practical American Cookery' (Dodd, Mead & Co.) is full of excellent recipes for lightening drudgery, securing variety and luxury, administering hospitality, and caring for the comfort of children and invalids. Questions of table etiquette are explained, and careful instructions given for practical marketing and carving, with suggestions for making the table service beautiful as well as easy. A sensible cover, adapted to kitchen exigencies, encloses the valuable contents.—'COCOA and Chocolate' is a pretty little book published by Walter Baker & Co., Dorchester, Mass., giving a short history of the production and use of the two articles, with more than fifty useful receipts for dainty beverages, puddings, cakes, and candies, in which chocolate plays a part. A well-engraved reproduction of Liotard's chocolate girl, which W. Baker & Co have made so familiar to the American public, forms the frontispiece.

ONE is prepared for something unusual in the 'Recollections of a Private Soldier,' by Frank Wilkeson (Putnam), on reading in the preface the author's statement that in his opinion the military salvation of this country requires that the West Point Academy be destroyed. He adds: 'It is susceptible of demonstration that the almost ruinous delay in suppressing the Rebellion and restoring the Union; the deadly failure of campaigns year after year; the awful waste of the best soldiers the world has seen; and the piling up of the public debt into the billions, was wholly due to West Point influence and West Point commanders.' He further asserts that men like Cæsar, Marlborough, Napoleon and Grant are not the products of schools, apparently forgetting for the moment that Grant was a product of West Point. After this few readers will be inclined to ask 'what?' but the critic continues to plod patiently through the 'recollections' of the first few chapters, though they are made up of repulsive details, in no way desirable in print. We search diligently but in vain for the expected 'demonstration' of the fatal influence of West Point.

'THE NAVAL HISTORY of the Civil War,' by Admiral David D. Porter (Sherman Publishing Co.), is a large and ornately-bound octavo of some 850 pages, and seems to be a very impartial and complete record of the efficient service rendered during the War by our Navy upon the sea, the gulf, and the inland waters. While possessing slight literary merit, and lacking in those graphic touches and vivid descriptions with which a Cooper or a Motley would have enriched the narrative, it is yet of great value for its clear and detailed statement of events, and especially for the mass of documentary matter exhumed from the files of the Navy Department in the shape of orders, dispatches, letters and reports, never before made so accessible to the reader. Illustrations are numerous, including battle-scenes, maps, charts and plans, and portraits of all the prominent officers. There is quite a full index, of peculiar arrangement, being alphabetical as far as the second letter only of the titles.

CELEN SABBRIN has issued through W. F. Fell & Co., of Philadelphia, a pamphlet called 'Science and Philosophy in Art,' which is a review of the works of the Impressionists exhibited at the American Art Galleries in this city last spring.

* Katy of Catoctin. By George Alfred Townsend. \$1.50. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

Mr. Whittier and His Correspondents.

MR. STODDARD, writing in *The Mail and Express*, comments thus sympathetically on our leading note of last week :

THE CRITIC informs its readers that it is requested by Mr. Whittier to state that he finds it impossible to reply to solicitations which reach him by every mail for autographs, notices of books, and answers to questions on matters of no real importance to the writers or himself. He has neither time nor strength for the examination and criticism of manuscripts, and cannot be responsible for the care of them. It is natural that Mr. Whittier, in common with other distinguished men of letters the world over, should have thousands of admirers, and it is natural also that they should desire to express their admiration, and receive a kindly word or two in reply. The feeling is a proper one, and we sympathize with it. But proper as it is, and much as we sympathize with it, there is Mr. Whittier to be considered, as well as his admirers, and this trifling consideration they are very apt to overlook. He is, and always has been, a man-of-letters, a man whose subsistence is derived from exercise of his pen—as surely so as the subsistence of the lawyer and the minister from the exercise of their tongues, and to expect him to exercise it in order to gratify those who have no claim upon him is certainly unreasonable. He lives by it, and it is not an easy life that it gives him, whatever his readers may think to the contrary when they read his finished and stirring poems. They should remember this, and be merciful, and they should remember also, and particularly, that he is an old man. What he might have been able to do once with comparative ease, say thirty or forty years ago, he is able to do no longer. This plea should prevail, and will prevail, with all who seriously and thoughtfully admire his writings. For another class, which pesters him, as it does most men-of-letters—the class which comes under the head of Autograph Fiend, there is nothing to be said except that it is a nuisance which ought to be exterminated. Apropos to this little lay sermon of which our old poet is the text, the reader of these notes may be glad to read, in what in cleric parlance is styled this connection, his latest poem, which we find in the February number of *The Atlantic Monthly* :

A DAY.

Talk not of sad November, when a day
Of warm, glad sunshine fills the sky of noon,
And a wind, borrowed from some morn of June,
Stirs the brown grasses and the leafless spray.
On the unfrosted pool the pillared pines
Lay their long shafts of shadow : the small rill,
Singing a pleasant song of summer still,
A line of silver, down the hill-slope shines.
Hushed the bird-voices and the hum of bees,
In the thin grass the crickets pipe no more ;
But still the squirrel hoards his Winter store,
And drops his nut-shells from the shag-bark trees.
Softly the dark green hemlocks whisper : high
Above, the spires of yellowing larches show,
Where the woodpecker and home-loving crow
And jay and nut-hatch Winter's threat defy.
O gracious beauty, ever new and old !
O sights and sounds of nature, doubly dear
When the low sunshine warns the closing year
Of snow-blown fields and waves of Arctic cold !
Close to my heart I fold each lovely thing
The sweet day yields ; and, not disconsolate,
With the calm patience of the woods I wait
For leaf and blossom when God gives us Spring !

The Sharples Portraits.

TO THE charges contained in the report of the Massachusetts Historical Society's Committee on the so-called Sharples portraits of the Washingtons, Major Walter has replied in a letter to the *Philadelphia Times*. He complains that the report is devoted rather to the exposure of literary and other blunders in his book on Washington, than a consideration of the pictures. If the Committee's aim had been 'simple truth and justice' towards the portraits, he thinks Mr. Parkman would have secured the assistance of 'the astute lawyer, Charles Henry Hart of Philadelphia,' or 'W. S. Baker of the same city,' or 'Dr. W. F. Poole, the painstaking, indefatigable Public Librarian of Chicago,' or

'C. H. Parsons, the unrivalled art caterer of the Harpers,' or 'Sartain, the foremost of the burin and living father in America of the engraving art.' He further says :

Nobody will deem it strange that original letters and documents are not forthcoming in proof of portraits. What portraits of greatly distinguished men can be thus verified? In most cases the paintings themselves are unerring vouchers of originality, and documentary proof would be unnecessary. The more especially as in an instance such as this of Washington, in which no great period has elapsed since the subject lived, and the holding of his portrait is traced from its first existence until now. It is not generally known that an attempt was made to steal the paintings some four years since, when at Minneapolis, by cutting them from their frames. Though the attempt proved unsuccessful, they needed to be relined at St. Paul, and it was afterwards found that the inexperience of the workman necessitated their return to England for the purpose of stripping off the new linings, which had been fixed with an injurious compound. Whether during this process and the needed repair previous to varnishing, any slight renewal of paint on the eyeballs may have been made, I am unable positively to state.

E. W. M., the New York correspondent of the *Boston Transcript*, writes to that paper under date of January 18th as follows :

The publishers of Major Walter's book [*Memorials of Washington*] will make an inquiry. The representative of Scribner & Welford told me to-day that he should write immediately to Major Walter, asking for an explanation of the charges brought against him by the Massachusetts Historical Society. One of the documents in this book that is of peculiar interest to New York people, and that is used both in the book and in the catalogue to impress the public, is a brief card signed by D. Huntington, President of the National Academy of Design, Eastman Johnson, J. Q. (printed G.) A. Ward and Launt Thompson, who are referred to as speaking 'authoritatively as to the originality and authenticity of these historical works.' The card is dated April 12, 1882, and reads as follows :—

The Sharples portraits of Washington, a full-face picture and a profile, and that of Lady Washington, all three painted in oils, and exhibited for several months in New York during 1882, bear every evidence of having been painted from the life. The full-face portrait was exhibited before the Historical Society of New York in 1854. The authenticity of these paintings has never been questioned by artists or others competent to form correct judgment.

Not unnaturally the painters and sculptors whose names are appended to this card are somewhat exercised over the recent revelations. I have talked with all of them recently about it, and found them all loth to believe that they ever knowingly signed any statement containing the last sentence as given above, though they do not deny that they may have done so.

In *The Evening Post* of April 13th, 1882, however, E. W. M. has found the card, with the artists' signatures attached, and Mr. Thompson vouches for its authenticity. It is highly improbable that these gentlemen will be in haste to put their names to such a certificate of character again ! Mr. George H. Moore, Librarian of the Lenox Library, who was Librarian of the Historical Society in 1854, as well as for many years before and after that date, writes to us in response to a question : 'The New York Historical Society never endorsed Mr. Walter, nor any of his pictures.'

A Lyric.

A LYRIC is a little bird—
Gay lover of the garden blooms,—
Whose tiny heart is ever stirred
By colors and perfumes.
Its flights are near the lowly things,
Not to the eagle epic's skies ;
It is content to flash its wings
Beneath my loved-one's eyes.
Go then, my song, you have the chart
To guide you to a gentle clime,—
Go build your nest, and thrill her heart
With flutterings of rhyme !

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.

"The Taming of the Shrew."

THE production of 'The Taming of the Shrew' by Mr. Augustin Daly, although not quite so momentous and significant an event as it has been represented in some quarters, is a most praiseworthy piece of managerial enterprise. It is the first time that the comedy has been seen in this country in any thing like its original shape; for the version played by Edwin Booth and others is a mere travesty, and the different operatic forms of the story can scarcely be considered dramatic performances. Mr. Daly has been compelled to modify, transpose and omit certain scenes, and has taken other liberties, but, on the whole, has treated the text with becoming respect. He has retained the introduction, and divides the story into five acts, two of which are played in one scene. The stage sets are handsomely painted and the costumes are not only uncommonly rich and tasteful, but all belong to one period—a precaution which is not always taken in Shakspearean revivals. The management, in short, is both liberal and scholarly.

The acting, as might be expected from so well trained a company, is highly intelligent and interesting, though scarcely in the style of Shakspearean comedy. Actors who have won their reputé in the lightest of contemporaneous pieces can hardly be expected to divest themselves of their modern manners at a moment's notice. Only two or three of Mr. Daly's players are thoroughly at home in their new conditions. Mr. Fisher, of course, is an excellent Baptista—courtly, suave and dignified; and Mr. Leclercq furnishes a capital sketch, in his own peculiar way, of the amorous dotard Gremio. Mr. Lewis is delightful as the comic servant Grumio,—a part which exactly fits his quaint, dry humor; and Mrs. Gilbert is perfectly at home in the small part of Curtis. The Petruchio of Mr. Drew is not very impressive physically, but is as vivacious and spirited in action as could be wished. The performance is an uncommonly good one. Ada Rehan plays Katherine with greater breadth and vigor than might have been expected, but she is manifestly overweighted by the part. She has not the face, voice or figure to maintain so formidable a personality. All that can be said fairly is that she makes the best possible use of the resources at her command, and demonstrates that her shortcomings are due more to physical limitations than to a failure of artistic perception. The Sly of Mr. Gilbert is amusing but entirely conventional, with no touch of the Shakspearean spirit. Mr. George Clarke, Mr. Bond, Mr. Otis Skinner, Miss Dreher and others all do well. The only real incompetency is exhibited by Mr. George Parkes. It is gratifying to know that the revival is meeting with hearty public appreciation.

The Lounger

THERE are two sides to every shield. Mr. Henry Norman told his story of the incomplete edition of 'The Witching Time,' put upon the American market by the Messrs. Appleton, in last week's CRITIC, and Mr. O. B. Bunce, the literary adviser of the Appletons, has since shown me his story. It is very simple, and consists of the printed pages of the English edition. In that edition the story is incomplete, but the pages are numbered consecutively. Unless each story had been read from beginning to end, there was no possible way of finding out that it was incomplete. It looks as if the American edition had been the most read, or at least as if it were the edition the author and editor had read with the most care, for the error was the same in the English copies of the book.

I FELL to chatting with Mr. Bunce, as I am fond of doing, on the general subject of literature and literary workers. We were discussing the apparent suddenness with which certain writers have sprung into success. He rather argued against the suddenness of it, and I cited the case of Charles Egbert Craddock in opposition to his argument. By so doing, I walked straight into the enemy's camp. 'Charles Egbert Craddock,' said Mr. Bunce, 'wrote stories for *Appleton's Journal* when it was a weekly. I cannot tell you just the year when her stories appeared, but I can

tell you that the *Journal* ceased publication in that form in 1876. At that time we had two of her stories among the matter left over. One was recently published in *The Christian Union*, the other appeared in "Appleton's Summer Book" in 1880. Here it is,—and he took down a dusty copy of the 'Summer Book' for 1880 from a shelf. There, sure enough was a story of the Tennessee Mountains, called 'Taking the Blue Ribbon at a Country Fair,' and signed 'Charles E. Craddock.' No one paid much attention to her stories then; and what is stranger still, Charles Egbert Craddock was even then a contributor to *The Atlantic Monthly*. Mr. Bunce thought, until the recent disclosure, that the author was a man, and he says that her letters concerning her manuscripts gave this impression even more decidedly than the stories themselves. So Miss Murfree was writing for nearly ten years before she made any stir in the world of letters. One of Mr. Cable's best stories, 'Posson Jone,' appeared in the pages of *Appleton's Journal* in 1876.

ABOUT a year ago the Brentanos published a book entitled 'Sylvian: a Tragedy, and Poems, by John Philip Varley.' The modestly issued volume made no popular sensation, but, among a few, a very intense impression indeed. The title-poem was the least valuable part of a collection, by an utterly unknown author, of really remarkable verse—especially on the lyrical side. The puzzle was to decide whether these were the brilliant experiments of a middle-aged, scholarly and poetic mind, or the boyish, imitative, vigorous, imaginative beginnings of a new and promising poet. The secret of the authorship is now an open one, and John Philip Varley proves to be a young law graduate of New York—Langdon Elwyn Mitchell, a son of the well-known physician Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, of Philadelphia. Dr. Mitchell is himself a novelist and poet, and the son of a physician (Dr. J. K. Mitchell) who published two volumes of verse as well as several medical works, so the literary genius of the author of 'Sylvian' is largely inherited. It is my private opinion that no young man who has lately appeared in the literature of the English tongue has a more definite call to devote himself seriously to a literary career.

READERS of the prefaces to Robert Louis Stevenson's later writings have been struck by the odd name of his house at Bournemouth, England. As I have been a little puzzled by it myself, I asked its meaning of Mr. Alexander, the painter (who visited the valetudinarian romance-writer last fall), and learned that the name 'Sherryvore' is taken from the largest of a cluster of rocks off the west coast of Scotland, on which a great lighthouse, similar to the Eddystone, was erected in 1838-42 by Alan Stevenson, the writer's uncle. How difficult a feat of engineering and architecture the building of this lighthouse was, admirers of the younger Stevenson's genius may learn from an elaborate illustrated article in *The American Architect* of January 8th.

IT IS CURIOUS that in the essay on 'Browning's Obscurity,' in his Introduction to the Study of Browning's Poetry—one of the best things in the book,—Prof. Corson should have gone badly astray in explaining the closing lines of the Invocation (to Mrs. Browning) from the Introduction to 'The Ring and the Book.' The last two lines are:

Some whiteness, which, I judge, thy face makes proud,
Some wanness where, I think, thy foot may fall.

Prof. Corson makes the reference to the 'face' express 'approval' of what the poet may have written, while 'thy foot may fall' signifies 'you may disapprove' something in the work. Miss Hersey, in 'Select Poems of Robert Browning,' edited by herself and Mr. Rolfe, makes the 'whiteness' in the heavens simply the representation or reflex of the lady's face, and the 'wanness' the place where her 'foot may fall.' Mr. Browning has been asked which of these explanations is the correct one, and has endorsed the latter—which is decidedly the simpler one. Whether 'obscure' or not, the poet can bother his commentators not a little, now and then.

IN A LETTER to Mr. I. E. Stevenson, of *The Independent*, Mr. Browning says, in reply to the question whether the speaker in 'In a Year' be wife or mistress, and the person referred to actually dead or only recreant: 'The little poem was meant to express the feeling of a woman towards a hopelessly alienated lover—husband, if you will. The summing-up of the account between much endeavor and as constant a resistance to it, leaves the result a mere "clay-cold clod" in the shape of a heart—to be "left" finally and altogether; when "what comes next?"—as something must.' Perhaps among all Mr. Browning's less important poems none has etched more delicately a bitterly significant situation.

MR. M. B. CURTIS, the popular actor whose contribution to the Christmas number of a New York dramatic weekly proved to have been written by Mr. Bret Harte, is 'starring' in a comedy called 'Caught in a Corner.' I suppose the play was named before Mr. Curtis made that little mistake about the authorship of his Christmas story.

JOHN BURROUGHS can hardly be called 'a born writer,' for his early taste seems to have been for anything but literary composition. In *Lippincott's* for February he relates that once, at school, when required to write something original, he copied an article from a comic almanac, and attempted to pass it off as his own; and when the teacher insisted upon his producing at least twelve lines of his own composition, on penalty of being 'kept in,' he was still unable or unwilling to oblige him. At the last moment, he says, 'one of my schoolfellows, a bright and favorite scholar, who has since turned out to be the Napoleon of the world of stocks and railroads, wrote twelve lines of doggerel on his slate and passed it slyly over to me. I coolly copied it, handed it to the teacher, and went forth with the rest of my mates when school was dismissed.' This friendly school-mate, I need hardly say, was Jay Gould, with whom as a boy Mr. Burroughs was in the habit of 'wrestling' when school was not in session.

BROWSING about among the treasures of the English branch of one of our largest booksellers the other day, I came upon a recently imported little water-color drawing. It is prettily framed, and represents a house at Islington once occupied by Charles Lamb, and in which he spent many happy days. Written out in the copperplate hand of the London representative of the firm is the following paragraph copied from one of Lamb's letters to B. Barton:—

When you come Londonward, you will find me no longer in Covent Garden; I have a cottage in Colebrook Row, Islington; a cottage, for it is detached; a white house with six good rooms in it; the New River (rather elderly by this time) runs (if a moderate walking pace can be so termed) close to the foot of the house; and behind is a spacious garden with vines (I assure you), pears, strawberries, parsnips, leeks, carrots, cabbages, to delight the heart of old Alcinous. You enter without passage into a cheerful dining-room, all studded over and rough with old books; and above is a lightsome drawing-room with three windows, full of choice prints. I feel like a great lord, never having had a house before.

THE SKETCH represents the rear of the house, with the garden, which was evidently its most picturesque side; and, judging from the costume of the lady picking gooseberries at the left, I should think that it must have been made at about the time the place was occupied by Lamb.

Magazine Notes.

The February *Scribner's* is a fine number. If no man can be eloquent on his first page, no magazine can be thrilling in its first number; but this second number shows the steady gain in force and interest which might be legitimately expected, and which is even greater than might be expected. 'The Likenesses of Julius Cæsar,' by John C. Ropes, has more than fifteen illustrations, all of which, there is reason to believe, are portraits of Cæsar made in his lifetime. Ex-Minister Washburne's 'Reminiscences of the Siege and Commune of Paris' gives a thrilling account of a Christmas dinner when sardines and corn-beef were a feast, and his vivid description of the entry of the Germans into Paris is illustrated by Thulstrup and Davis, who were both there at the time of the Commune. Prof. J. R. Soley, in 'Our Naval Policy,' adds another strong plea for a realizing sense of our feeble and exposed position. The extracts from the diary of Gouverneur Morris, by Annie Cary Morris, are noteworthy, if only for the single note about Marie Antoinette: 'I am not, however, quite pleased with her conduct.' This single entry in the private diary of an eminent man is worth all the squabbles of historical statement, as a clew to the fact that the unfortunate Queen was certainly indiscreet. The fiction of the number is all good. 'The Residuary Legatee,' by J. S. of Dale, opens delightfully; Mr. Bunner's 'Story of a New York House' gives admirably the flavor of the time; 'The Ducharmes of the Baskatonge,' by Duncan Campbell Scott, is as strong as it ought to be with so many consonants in its own name and that of its author; and 'Half a Curse,' by Octave Thanet, is the piquant title of a story about an indignant negress who, whenever her half-curse seems to be in the way of execution, piously exclaims: 'Bress de good Debbil for dat!' *Scribner's*, so far, has excellent magazine poetry, and wise editors may note the fact that the names of some of these poets are new ones, though Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton, whose deaths in verse are as num-

erous as were Charlotte Cushman's farewells to the stage, dies once more in this February number in one of the sonnets which make us glad of each of her resurrections.

Readers of *The Atlantic* will turn first to the five-page poem by Lowell, and will rejoice to find in it, notwithstanding its sonorous Latin title—'Credimus Jovem Regnare,'—the old Lowellian ring of clear New England commonsense expressed in delicious nonsense of rhythm and rhyme. Mr. Lowell's argument, besides its general tone, has always a trenchant sentence that one can carry away as the gist of it all; and who has gone so closely to the core of this argument as the wise poet who tells us that we are foolish to quarrel as to who has the right key, *where there is no door?* The first part of a capital little story, 'The Lady from Maine,' by Lawrence Saxe, ought to prove to the editor that *The Atlantic* only gains in flavor by the occasional admission of a new and unknown name to its exclusive table of contents. Olive Thorne Miller contributes one of her most attractive papers, about a sprightly pet jay whom she rightly dubs 'A Bird of Affairs.' John Fiske's paper is on the Federal Convention, and treats of the three great compromises that laid the foundation of our Federal Constitution. Mr. Crawford's Eastern romance deepens in interest, because—take notice, realists—it is so full of mystery.

It is a comfort to slip into an arm-chair with the whole of a serial, so to speak, in *Lippincott's*; and Miss McClelland's 'Self-Made Man' is worthy of the author of the fine story 'Oblivion.' Mr. William E. Curtis's 'Day with the President' is readable if not very new in its information. John Burroughs gives us a glimpse, in 'Mere Egotism,' at the authors who have chiefly moulded his mind, the principal one being Emerson. Charles E. L. Wingate has prepared in 'Our Actors and their Preferences' a brief account of the favorite play and favorite quotation of some of the most noted stage favorites. But two of the best things in the number are Robert Grant's capital 'Two Ways of Telling a Story'—a battle royal between an idealist and a realist and one of the best things Mr. Grant has written lately,—and a brief paper in the Monthly Gossip by E. F. W.

Mr. Howells begins in *Harper's* his novel of 'April Hopes,' which so far is a delightful realistic description of a Class-Day at Harvard. Andrew Lang contributes a bright little poem on 'The Fairy's Gift,' which proves to be nearsightedness. Mr. Warner writes of 'The Acadian Land' as of a country not of this world; and Gibson and Kappes help make us believe him. Mr. Millet's second paper on 'Campaigning with the Cossacks,' with his own spirited drawings, is worthy of the first, and includes a terribly realistic description of the Russian punishment with the nagajka. Ten charming illustrations by Parsons and Abbey accompany Cowley's poem of 'The Wish,' and the standbys are Sir Edward Reed's paper on the great navies, 'Springhaven' and 'Narka.'—On Monday evening of this week a private dinner was given to Mr. Roswell Smith, President of the Century Company, by his associates in business, to which a few of the writers who have been most continuously identified with *The Century* and *St. Nicholas*, and who are personal friends of Mr. Smith, were asked as guests. The occasion, as stated in the letter of invitation, was the wish to offer the President the congratulations of his fellow-workers, and to remind him that the Company has just completed 'the sixteenth and most successful season in the steadily-ascending record of its prosperity and influence.' The dinner was served at Pinard's, in Fifteenth Street. Mr. Gilder presided, Mr. Scott occupying the other end of the table. Speeches were made by E. C. Stedman, Frank R. Stockton, George W. Cable, Dr. Washington Gladden, Cephas Brainerd (counsel for the Company), Theodore De Vinne and others.—Houghton, Mifflin & Co., have become the American publishers of *The Quarterly Review* and *The Edinburgh Review*.

Le Français, the excellent educational monthly of which Jules Lévy has been the publisher and proprietor for several years, has passed into the hands of Jean de Peiffer, a part of the agreement being that Mons. Lévy shall furnish for publication every month an original article on French affairs—politics, literature, gossip, etc. The January and February numbers have come to us from Boston, and are full of promise for the future of this well-conducted periodical. They contain selections from the writings of well-known French authors, both in prose and verse; letters and verses to be corrected, and the same, a month later, showing corrections; discussions of grammatical questions and questions of pronunciation; French to be translated into English and English to be translated into French; and various other departments of special value to students, besides Mons. Lévy's monthly budget of fact and comment connected with matters of timely interest.

Poets and Poetry in America.*

[The Quarterly Review. Continued from THE CRITIC of Jan. 22d, and concluded.]

ARDENT, enthusiastic, eager to rehearse the epic of a man, Lowell threw himself into the stream of national life. The current was already seething and foaming with the impulse of a mighty movement. The application of science to industrial enterprise changed the face of nature; habits, ideas, fashions of thought, altered with marvellous rapidity; population doubled and trebled itself; society underwent a transformation as complete as it was sudden; literature became a power. Everywhere was spreading the influence of Channing and of Emerson, humanizing Religion and Nature, protesting in the name of something higher against the exclusive reign of the senses and the understanding. Towards the same end contributed the genial culture and tender romance of Longfellow. A movement so rapid and extensive necessarily brought in its train vast social changes. Strange hopes were in the air of an approaching millennium: the sin of slavery must be purged before its advent. Lowell threw himself, heart and soul, into the cause of the Abolitionists. His fervour made him didactic but its fiery impulse when the preaching element subsided, gave his verse a peculiar force.

In the 'Biglow Papers' his enthusiasm urged him to a masterpiece which ranks with the greatest political satires of classic or modern Europe, and enrolled Lowell among the successful humorists of the world. Parson Wilbur, with his simplicity and vanity, his pedantry and wit, his solid and varied learning, his combined capacity for sermonizing and hard hitting, is an incomparable editor. Hosea's drily humorous picturesqueness, strong common sense, effective and homely illustrations, and quaint Scriptural allusions, admirably represent the New England character. The type of provincial Yankee which Lowell depicts is now nearly extinct. Competent judges appear to be agreed that the dialect is reproduced with the utmost purity, and that as a specimen of the vernacular idiom the Biglow Papers are infinitely superior to Sam Slick or Major Downing. Hosea Biglow and Bird-o'-freedom Sawin are dramatic creations, racy of the soil yet intensely human, at once American and universal. It is not in the New World only that there are military braggarts, or that 'pious editors' or 'north-by-south candidates' endeavour to dodge the moral laws of the universe, and steal a march on virtue without having their retreat cut off. There is no ribaldry in the Scriptural phrases; they are not introduced as an element in the ridiculous effect, but are the natural expression of a simple people whose language and modes of thought are saturated by Biblical feeling and phrases. There is in the pungent satire none of the misanthropic ferocity of a Swift, nor the irritated vanity of a Byron; but beneath the bitter hatred of slavery, the incisive sharpness of the political denunciations, the withering scorn of the social faults, lies a fund of genial humour and human sympathy. The purpose is grave and serious, for it forms part of the writer's very existence; yet the fun is apparently reckless. A second glance shows that only a cool brain, steady hand, and complete self-command, could apply the lash with such unerring aim and sinewy strength to the tenderest part of the adversary. The blows fall quickly, unexpectedly, and never miss their mark. They not only sting, but make their victims ludicrous. Lowell effected for the Abolitionist cause what a wilderness of homilists could not achieve. He turned the laugh against the slave-owners; the light shafts of ridicule penetrated the toughest hides and could not be withdrawn. The second series is inferior to the first in freshness and vigour. Yet there are lines in the tenth letter of the series, which perhaps strike as high a note of poetry as Lowell has ever reached. 'The Biglow Papers' form an invaluable commentary on the history of the times. All the deep interests, with which the twenty years that succeeded 1848 were throbbing, beat in that unique collection of humorous and passionate verse. None the less interesting are the Papers because they show the mental changes through which Lowell passed. In the first series he complains of the ascendancy of the South in the councils of the States, and prefers the severance of the Federal Union to its continuance. In the second, he advocates the assertion by force of arms of the physical supremacy of the North. The light, airy tone, in which the later series begins, shows that the war was expected to be nothing but a summer picnic; but the tone grows grimmer as the death-grapple continued, till personal loss and the gloom and horror of the gigantic struggle drew from the poet the tenth letter of the series. The 'Fable for Critics,' a slashing but discriminating criticism on American poets, gives another proof, if that were needed, of Lowell's power of satire and humorous invention.

* 1. The Poetical Works of Bryant, Whittier, Emerson, Longfellow, Poe, Holmes, Lowell, Harte, Miller, Whitman. 2. The Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Edited by Samuel Longfellow. London, 1886. 3. The Poets of America. By E. C. Stedman. London, 1885.

Lowell's serious poetry is fresh and vigorous, deeply stamped with the personality of the poet, marked at its best by that condensation which is the charm and justification of verse, kept close to human life in its concrete realities by his keen and practical shrewdness. It has little abstract or ideal inspiration, and wants that brooding cast of mind which belongs to the prophet. Perhaps the poetry of a true humorist can never bear a message. Lowell has little of the artistic instinct which was Longfellow's guide. His exuberance of fancy continually squanders its wealth on incongruities and trivialities: some patch of crude, harsh colouring repeatedly disturbs the harmony of tone. Both in his verse and in his prose he sometimes mistakes far-fetched decoration for richness. No one has put his early faults so clearly and yet so wittily as Lowell himself.

There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus to climb
With a whole bale of isms tied together with rhyme,
He might get on alone, spite of brambles and boulders,
But he can't with that bundle he has on his shoulders.
The top of the hill he'll ne'er come nigh reaching
Till he learns the distinction between singing and preaching.
His lyre has some chords that would ring pretty well;
But he'd rather by half make a drum of the shell,
And rattle away till he's old as Methusalem,
At the head of a march to the last New Jerusalem.

In later life the tendency of his poetry is toward transcendentalism and introspection. His early inspiration had deserted him. The moral and national enthusiasm of the Union movement inspired his noble Commemoration Ode; but the tragedies, public and private, of the war clouded his sense of the triumph. The tide of tumultuous progress rushed too fiercely along. He recoiled from the materialism of evolution and from the extremes to which men of science pushed their prophetic assertions. He takes his stand more and more on the ancient ways, and seeks in 'the Cathedral' that calm and satisfaction which he could no longer find in political movements.

His descriptive poetry reaches a high standard of excellence. Nothing better of its kind has been produced in America. His touches are bold and sharp, his outlines never blurred; the vision is reproduced as it actually appeared to an acute and careful observer. He has followed the footsteps of Nature in all her moods and disguises with the devotion of a lover; he does not study her movements like a philosopher, his enjoyment of her beauty is fresh and spontaneous as a child's. Hence his descriptive verse glows with a fresh summer colouring which puts to shame the autumnal faded tints of Bryant. His fancy is more iridescent than that of Wordsworth. The ripple of gaiety, which ruffles the depths of spiritual feeling, imparts a marvellous charm and variety to his poetry. Nature possesses him, not he Nature; Wordsworth finds Nature mirrored in his own heart, Lowell sees himself reflected in Nature.

I was the wind that dapples the lush grass,
The tide that crept with coolness to its roots,
The thin-winged swallow skating on the air.

In other words he lets himself swoon away on the breast of Nature and merges in hers his own personality. The lofty rapture, the strong, single-hearted joy of Wordsworth, belongs to a higher kind of poetry. But it is obvious that Lowell's more sensuous feeling enables him to depict Nature with a greater directness than the more subjective and brooding passion of the English poet will allow. In the unfailing freshness of his illustrations, the local truth of his descriptive touches, the rich catholicity of his acquirements, the solid basis of his practical understanding, Lowell combines, as has been said, the best qualities of his class. He stands, in our opinion, first among the American poets of culture. To him America owes her finest satire, her noblest ode, and her truest descriptive poetry.

There remain the democratic poets, among whom Bret Harte, Cincinnatus (Joaquin) Miller, and Walt Whitman present themselves as types. All three are poets of the peculiar life of the New World, and not of the features which it possesses in common with the Old. Bret Harte is the poet of the red-shirted diggers, Miller of filibuster chiefs like Walker in Nicaragua, Whitman of the workmen on wharves and farms, in dockyards, factories and foundries.—of the free, strong life of Young America.

The two first-named poets deal with the rough lives of the pioneers of American civilization, the stage of semi-barbarous lawlessness and rude simplicity, through which new settlements pass before they become civilized communities. They dwell on the peculiar features of life in the New World, the contrast between barbarism and civilization. Dependent like the savage on his own hands, the settler of the Far West is within reach of the resources of civilization. This was the life of which critics expected pictures at the commencement of the century. But it was

not till the daily drudgery became less penurious, not till the discoveries of science enforced the contrast by means of steam and electricity, that the suggestiveness of backwoods life became apparent. Here, if anywhere, settlers may combine the practical resourcefulness of the savage with the intellectual activity of the dweller in cities.

Bret Harte undoubtedly owes some of his popularity to the novelty and freshness of his subjects. The key-note of his poetry is that somewhere in the most lawless nature exists a point of honour and a conscience. From coarse and common clay he creates life-like figures of these pioneers of civilization, rough gold-diggers whose shamefaced tenderness, hidden under the veil of reckless profanity, is singularly affecting in its unexpected display. He paints with a few broad touches, without any false gloss, vivid pictures of a society evolved from the concourse of lawless individuals, a society which sets little store by human life, but scrupulously obeys its own code of honour. A man of less genius might mar the effect of the picture by magnifying the romance. But Bret Harte tells his wild incidents with a simplicity which seems to make light of their strangeness. His diggers are never converted into sanctimonious sentimentalists; they remain fierce, unruly, cursing, reckless scamps, capable of chivalric heroism, open to tender impulses; as ready to lay down their lives for a partner as, under other circumstances, to shoot him like a dog. Vice and self-sacrifice are effectively contrasted. There is nothing maudlin in the sentiment; no siege is laid to the feelings; the heroes are never allowed to attitudinize, or indulge in the luxury of grief. It is a pathos that struggles to hide itself, and strangles a sob with a curse. Bret Harte is a master of that understatement which constitutes the essence of American irony. Fluency is fatal to many of his compatriots; Bret Harte's eloquence is that of a hiatus. His most characteristic gift is dramatic suggestiveness, the conveyance not of vague undermeanings, but of definite ideas. A few careless touches carry the reader into the very centre of the subject. Stories could not be told in fewer words.

Except in his subject, Joaquin Miller is not essentially American. He is the poet of the roving adventurous life of a borderer. He wrote the 'Songs of the Sierras' from his own experience with all the ardour of youth; his voice had the genuine ring of one who had lived 'among the Modocs.' He is at his best in 'Arazonian,' and 'with Walker in Nicaragua.' Besides their striking descriptions, both poems display a considerable dramatic power. But elsewhere he is deficient in Bret Harte's self-control. The dramatic element is swept away, together with sense, metre, and grammar, by impetuous gusts of passionate imagery. His true poetic genius is disfigured by carelessness and affectation. In him seems to flow the 'quick-mettled rich blood, impulses, and love' of the 'glistening, perfumed South'; it appears as if his nature had been steeped in the ancient civilization of Mexico. His poetry is tropical in its profusion of colour, and Eastern in the glowing heat of its impetuous passion.

Apart from the extreme difficulty of discussing a poet like Whitman, to whom existing standards cannot be applied with exactness, the contest which rages round his name seems to necessitate a more lengthy examination of his merits than can be included in a general article. From the first he has invited dogmatic criticism. As wild and unkempt as he is fresh and vigorous, he has excited as much opposition as enthusiasm. Is his extravagance originality or inflation, his lawlessness genius or license, his obscurity depth or nonsense, his self-assertion strength or bluster? Only in the briefest outline will it be possible to indicate our view of the nature of his claims, and of the degree of his failure and success.

He claims, though it is understood that his views have undergone some modification, to be the founder of a new literature, the prophet and poet of the United States as the Great Republic of the present and the great Democracy of the future. The past does not legislate for him, for every generation is a law to itself. He admits no such contracted view of art or human nature as belongs to an aristocratic literature, relegates the stock materials and forms of poetry to the background, includes all words among the means,—all classes, characters, actions, occupations, functions among the subjects,—of poetic representation. He abjures all respect to received opinion, all deference to accepted canons, all obedience to authority. For the poet of America he demands absolute freedom of treatment, unbounded liberty in choice of form and subject. He composes systematically with the ever-present purpose of breaking down the barriers between prose and verse, and creating a new style which shall supersede all others in ease, variety, and flexibility. Yet at the same time he professes to write with that unconscious naturalness which is the art of arts and the sworn foe of artificiality. In his pictures of practical life no selection is exercised, but every element is represented. He sings of man as a microcosm of the world, in his relations to the past, the present,

and the future; of Personality with the egotism of one who, in celebrating himself, celebrates the Adam of the Nineteenth Century, the manhood of the American democracy; of materialism with an ideal realism which treats 'objects gross and the unseen world' as one, and the body as the living garment of the soul; of Universality with the enthusiasm of an American patriot who rises above distinctions of race or nationality to chant the evangel-song of democratic comradeship. It forms a curious comment on Whitman's claims that he finds more readers in the Old World which he despises than in the New which he glorifies, and that the multitude, whose singer he professes to be, welcome Longfellow but remain absolutely ignorant of the literary merits of their own poet.

Such pieces as the burial hymn to Lincoln 'When lilacs last, &c.,' or 'Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking,' stamp Whitman as a lyric genius of the highest order. In creative force and imaginative vigor Whitman stands, in our opinion, first among American poets. But he has not justified his claim to initiate a new departure in the form or the substance of poetry. His finest passages are written when, in the sweep of his lyric passion, he forgets his system and his purpose. His poems come before the world in a shape which is as attractive to some as it is repulsive to others. In either case the audacity of the strange attire rivets attention. Yet the form is not new. At their best his lines have the sweep of the Hebrew prophets; they roll in upon the ear, rhythmic as the waves beating on the shore. But just as often they resemble the baldest prose of Tupper. Whitman denounces rhyme as the medium of inferior writers and trivial subjects. His slatternly prose irresistibly suggests the conclusion, that his revolt against the tinkling serenader's style was confined, if it was not stimulated, by mechanical incapacity or at least by a want of artistic patience. In the first heat of his revolutionary enthusiasm, he claimed to throw art to the winds, and to demonstrate its futility when applied to the higher forms of poetry. In his maturer judgment he poses as the Wagner of poetry. It is possible, and even probable, that poetry, like music, may undergo great rhythmical changes; but whatever change takes place will be in the direction, not of the neglect, but of the development of Art. It is no defence of Whitman's theory that he wished to render poetry inartistic; it is a complete and adequate defence, that he attempts to produce in verse the cosmical symphony, the strong musical pulse that beats throughout the world, the great undersong of the universal surge of Nature. Had this conception been in his mind from the first, had he been an innovator and not a mere iconoclast, he might have worked out his system less crudely. His vocabulary is strong and rich. He bows to no aristocracy of words. He hopes to see the Versailles of verse invaded by the language of the 'Halles.' He uses whatever expression most forcibly conveys his meaning, without regard to conventionalities. Thus his language is piercingly direct, and he repeatedly strikes out original epithets or phrases which create a picture in themselves.

In the protest which Whitman makes against conventionalities of form and language, he did good service; but he only echoes the voice of Emerson. His claim to be the founder of a new poetic school is more justified by the substance than the form of his verse. A characteristic feature in his treatment of his vast, measureless subject is the method which he adopts of union instead of division—comprehension, not selection. The body is not divided from the soul, nor the spiritual separated from the material world. Modern science, by its analysis, lays waste much of the old domain of the imagination; Whitman shows that modern poetry may, by its synthesis, gather into a focus the scattered rays of light, and keep scientific research in contact with humanity. In his democratic theories he gives utterance to no novel thoughts, though he expresses his convictions with so striking a force that the ideas appear original. His view is that of a transcendental evolutionist. He clothes in concrete form the abstract ideas of Emerson. To his own noble ideal of the future of Democracy he adheres with a confidence, which even his gloomy estimate of the present condition of society wholly fails to shake. On the wide breadths of his canvas he throws, with strangely vivid patches of local colouring, the restless ties and energies of his nation. His theory of poetry excludes him from exercising the principle of selection. He only ends his catalogues when his sense of number and variety is satisfied. Clumsy and inartistic though the device may be, his lists are sometimes a powerful means of expressing vastness.

But it is not the size of the picture, nor the novelty of the thoughts, nor the audacity of the form, which constitutes the fascination of Whitman's poetry. It is the impressive personality of the writer; the force and vitality of his broad, living sympathy with his fellows, whatever their degree or condition; the strength of the dear love of comradeship, which is as feminine in its tenderness as it is masculine in its passion; the fresh, breezy, open-air character of his descriptive touches. The mongrel words, the transitions, the slang, the

bald prose, the unendurable catalogues, hardly check the swing and volume of the whole poem, which moves with the force of thousands sweeping forward as one man. Whitman's attempts to assimilate the results of science lead him to contemplate Nature as a whole, and to render general effects rather than minute details. Yet, though his picture of the mocking-bird is ornithologically incorrect, he often displays a faculty of close observation which is as accurate as his local touches are vivid. His introspective attitude causes him, as a general rule, to represent the effect of Nature upon the mind rather than the natural object itself. Thus, in one of his lyric outbursts upon midsummer night, he expresses the physical ecstasy which it produces, not the special features of the

. . . bare-bosom'd night, . . . magnetic nourishing night,
Night of south winds, night of the few large stars!
Still nodding night—mad, naked, summer night.

The passages in the 'Children of Adam' are, in our opinion, ineffably and unnecessarily disgusting. But their place in the poem is obvious, and Whitman may appeal to a life of singular nobility and heroism to rebut the charges of prurency. In theory he has right on his side. If every part, every natural action, every organ of humanity, were equally honoured and sacred, mock modesty would be at an end. To be naked and not ashamed—the primitive innocence of the savage—is the ideal state. Prurience thrives in concealment: it cannot bear exposure. But Whitman either did not pause to consider whether it is possible to re-establish the primitive condition of unconsciousness, or, as we incline to think, was too fanatical in his convictions to reflect upon the fearful risks by which such an attempt is inevitably accompanied. It is this fanaticism which is at once his strength and his weakness. To it he owes that vehement absorption in his creed which belongs to the prophet: it raises his passion to an elemental force; it enables him to sing the future of Democracy in a voice of full-toned ecstasy which never shakes or falters. On the other hand, it deprives him of humour and self-criticism; it changes his consciousness of strength into an arrogance which is blind to all merit in the work or the methods of others; it inspires him with an exaggerated contempt for that Art to the principles of which his genius pays a silent and perhaps unconscious homage.

Like all modern versifiers, American poets of the cultured school are characterized by scholarly refinement of thought, command of dainty fancies, and mastery of the technicalities of their art. As the special birthright of their nation, they possess fluency of language, genius for effective illustrations, and power of condensing thought into portable epigrammatic shape. Their native nimbleness of mind enables them to approach their subject from many different points of view, each of which suggests a profusion of novel associations. It is this power that imparts to their verse the charm of freshness. Their poetry has the transparent brilliancy, the sparkle, and the sharp outline of cut glass. But it is vitreous, not opaline. There is little depth of light and shade, no flesh-tints, no broad, massive effects of colour. This class of American poetry, as the abundance of the crop seems to indicate, is the fruit of extreme culture. The soil in which it grows is never rank, of course, but neither is it deep or rich. There is not the gusto and relish of life among cultivated Americans which seem to belong to master-minds. The climate has sharpened the mental perceptions, but dried up the marrow and the juice. The intellect preponderates over all that is emotional and spontaneous; the critical and discerning elements overpower the passionate and fervid. Refinement seems to rob the literary character of its bone and sinew, and culture to bleach its flowers of their colour. And, after all, the grace of strength transcends all other grace. Touches of anything gross and strong are rare: the dauntlessness of Nature seems exhausted; there is little that is grand-hearted, tumultuous, and self-forgetful.

On the other hand, and in these days it is a most legitimate source of pride, nothing is more remarkable than the consistent purity of the moral tone, and the unfailing delicacy of feeling. There are few, if any, lines in the whole range of this class of American poetry that a dying poet need wish to blot. From first to last, there are no insidious suggestions.

The democratic school of poets, with all their glaring faults, recognize that dainty perfection of expression is no substitute for stimulating thought; and that subtle analyses of the lighter emotions or delf-fingered sketches of society may display ingenuity or fancy, but afford no occasion for the exercise of creative force or imaginative power. Whitman has failed to revolutionize poetry. Rhyme and metre will endure so long as the songs of men or birds; Art will outlive the longest life. But the future is, we believe, in other respects with him and his school. He illustrates, as often by failure as by success, what are the true needs of modern poetry. Power, and force, and freedom, confer an immortality

which no culture can secure. Behind the poetry there must be a living personality, a nature, coarse-fibred perhaps, but strong, deep, and vehement. Modern poetry, again, must be full of human interest. The cultivated poets of America have carried description to the highest pitch of perfection, perhaps because it affords the readiest escape from the crudities of their material civilization. But pictures of Nature, however exquisite, are comparatively valueless, unless they form the backgrounds for human action. The living figures are too often absent. It is in this field of human life and character that American novelists have reaped abundant harvest. There is yet room for her poets. The dramatic element is strong in Bret Harte, and, though Whitman draws types rather than individuals, his poetry is thronged with the concrete realities of life. Lastly, the future position of poetry must largely depend on her attitude to modern science. Legends, and myths, and romance, seem destined to disappear: but in their place are revealed unsuspected expanses of knowledge, and unbounded vistas opened to the imagination. Here again Whitman has proved a worthy pioneer. In many striking passages he has anticipated and assimilated the latest results of scientific enquiry.

To conjecture the future of poetry, whether in the Old or the New World, would be a fond and foolish task. Mr. Stedman considers that many causes combine at the present moment to check its growth in America. Among the principal causes of impaired vitality, and of the blight which destroys the promised fruit, this acute and fair-minded critic includes the Law of Copyright. The following paragraph, with which we conclude our survey of American poetry, is taken from his remarks upon this important subject:—

All classes of literary workmen still endure the disadvantage of a market drugged with stolen goods. Shameless as is our legal plundering of foreign authors, our blood is most stirred by the consequent injury to home literature,—by the wrongs, the poverty, the discouragement to which the foes of International Copyright subject our own writers.

The Fine Arts

Art Notes.

Puck had a capital cartoon on the 12th instant, representing 'American Art and the Backwoods Legislator'—an artist presenting a petition for the free importation of foreign works of art, and Congressman Hayseed replying: 'No, young feller, you don't want no Free Art. I know your business better than you do yerself, an' I'm going to protect yer, every time!'

—The January *Portfolio* has a fine etching of a Dutch interior, 'The Idle Servant,' by C. O. Murray, after Nicholas Maes; one of old Temple Bar, by Brunet-Debaines; and one of Mr. Watts's clumsy 'Dray-horses,' by G. W. Rhead. Architects and their patrons may get many useful hints from the illustrated articles on 'Half-timber Houses in the Weald of Kent,' and on Putney. There is an interesting article, by Cosmo Monkhouse, on Auguste Rodin, 'now the most discussed of French sculptors,' whose work was rejected at the last Royal Academy exhibition in London.

—The *Magazine of Art* for February has, as frontispiece, a good reproduction by photogravure of Boughton's 'Councillors of Peter the Headstrong.' There are illustrated articles about West Drayton, the late King Ludwig of Bavaria's palaces, Moreau's illustrations to La Fontaine's Fables, 'The Paris of the Revolution' and 'Glimpses of Artist Life.' It is an unusually good number of this excellent magazine.

—The *Art Review* for December contains articles by Ripley Hitchcock, Mrs. Edward W. Dodd, Charles de Kay and William A. Potter, and several pages of well-selected art notes. Mrs. Dodd discourses of American paintings, and, after saying that there are three supremely admirable subjects fitted for treatment and execution according to modern methods—namely, 'nature,' the human figure and decoration,—announces her belief that the subjects usually chosen by our young American artists utterly fail in awaking a vivid interest—which is extremely hard on American artists. Some of them show, however, in the etching and the three photogravures given with the magazine, that they know what constitutes an interesting subject.

—The supplement to the January *Art Amateur* contains full-size working drawings of holly-leaves for a carved panel, of chrysanthemums for a painted panel, of black alder for ceramic painting, and other decorative studies; and a number of designs for embroidery. The colored plate is of a little girl with 'Marguerites,' after a painting by Edith Scannell. There is an article on the American Art Association Exhibition, and one on Paul Baudry, the latter very fully illustrated with excellent reproductions of some of his designs for the Paris Opera House.

—The Water-Color exhibition will open at the Academy of Design on Monday, and the Graves collection on the next day at the American Art Galleries. The latter, which consists of paintings, sculpture, bric-à-brac, furniture, etc., will remain on view till the beginning of the sale, at Chickering Hall, on Wednesday, Feb. 9.—The Salmagundi exhibition closed on Wednesday evening. The attendance had not been large. About 100 sales were made, amounting to \$4000.

—The jury for selecting works in New York for the American Exhibition at London consists of Messrs. Bierstadt, J. Q. A. Ward, Thomas Moran, William M. Chase, Alden Weir and Frederick Dielman.

—'Calling Out the Hounds,' a large picture by Alexander Pope and Emil Carlsen, is on exhibition at 4 West 22nd Street. It represents the Myopia pack of hounds who have failed to find a fox and are being called out by the huntsmen. The dogs are portraits of hounds belonging to the pack. The landscape setting of ruddy autumn woodland is brushed in vigorously by Mr. Carlsen, and Mr. Pope's figures, handled in a manner the reverse of broad, do not gain by the contrast. The picture is more interesting to sportsmen than to artists.

—The third volume of Scribner's 'Cyclopædia of Painters and Painting' is nearly ready. Four volumes complete the set. Only five hundred copies of this fine edition were printed, and of these but fifty are left. This makes it now a 'scarce' book, and the publishers have consequently raised the price of the remaining fifty from \$100 to \$150 a set.

—Works by Worthington Whittredge will be sold at the Ortgies gallery, February 9. An executor's sale of the works of the late Wm. Bliss Baker will be held at the same place on the 15th.

—The illustrated catalogue of the A. T. Stewart sale will be ready about February 15th.

—Robert Blum and Otto Bacher have returned from abroad. The former had been absent for three years. Most of his time was spent in Venice. Walter Paris goes soon to England. He has been appointed Professor of Landscape Drawing at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich.

—At Doll & Richard's gallery in Boston is a fine painting by Winslow Homer, which he calls 'Undertow.' Two young girls who have been carried out to sea while bathing are brought to shore by a couple of stalwart sailors. Each of the four figures in the surf is wonderfully expressive in pose and action. The greatest charm of the picture, however, is in its atmospheric effects, which show a most careful and conscientious study of nature. At the same gallery may be seen a number of strongly-painted decorative panels by Miss E. B. Greene.

—Gen. Charles P. Stone, who was connected with the construction of the Statue of Liberty pedestal as Engineer-in-Chief, died last Monday of pneumonia. He was a veteran of the Civil War, and served from 1870 to 1883 as Chief of Staff of the Army of the Khedive of Egypt. His death follows that of Gen. Loring, also of the Khedive's staff, by only a month. They both died in this city and from the same disease.

—The younger artists of the city are pleased with the election of Mr. Harry Watrous as a member of the Art Committee of the Union League Club.

—The success of the recently established evening modelling-class at the Art Students' League has led to the formation of an afternoon class, to meet daily from 4.30 to 6.30, under the direction of George T. Brewster, instructor of the evening class.

—Mons. Rajon, the etcher, is making a black-and-white portrait of Mr. W. T. Walters, with a view to making an etching from it.

—A pleasing collection of water-color drawings by Charles Copeland is on exhibition at Williams & Everett's gallery, Boston. They are all landscapes, mostly of scenes in New England.—The dining-room of a private house in Boston has an elaborate finish of wood-carving which cost \$40,000.

—A lovely Madonna and Child by the Tyrolean painter, Franz Defregger, exhibited at Schaus's for the benefit of a charity, is the property of Mr. David L. Einstein, and is dated 1886. It shows the Virgin, a life-size, imposing figure with a brunette face, holding the child in her arms and poised on grayish clouds, which seem to melt away from the centre of the composition, revealing a cold, pale blue sky. The figure throws a dark shadow across the clouds. Cherubs press about the Virgin, who is clothed in a white garment with a long gray veil forming a hood and floating about the body. The composition of the lines is admirable, and the coldness of the color-scheme, relieving the warm dusk of the face and hair, produces a fine and original effect.

—The thirty-fifth exhibition of the Boston Art Club, which opened on the 14th inst., will not be closed until the 12th of February. The collection, which is one of unusual interest, numbers 135 oil paintings, more than a fourth of which are contributed by New York artists. Kappes's 'Tattered and Torn,' valued at \$1200, has been purchased by the Club. The landscapes 'On the Muscatuck,' by T. C. Steele, and 'November in the Woods,' by F. A. Bicknell, have also been bought by the Club. The action of Mr. Abbott Graves, who removed his 'skied' picture from the exhibition without knowledge or consent of the committee, is exciting considerable comment in New York and Boston art circles.—The Paint and Clay Club of Boston will give an exhibition in the latter part of February.

Notes

THE 'people of importance in their day' with whom Mr. Browning 'parleys' in his new book of poems, published to-day by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., are Bernard de Mandeville, Daniel Bartoli, Christopher Smart, George Bubb Dodginton, Francis Furini, Gerard de Lairese, and Charles Avison. The 'parleyings' are introduced by a dialogue between Apollo and the Fates, and concluded by another between John Füst and his friends.

—Mr. Edmund Collins, who is to be associated with Mr. Seligman as assistant managing editor of *The Epoch*, is regarded in Canada, we are assured by a well-known Canadian *littérateur*, as, 'after Mr. Goldwin Smith, our most effective writer on political and other topics of the day, and is considered one of our best authorities on contemporary literature, American and English.'

—A new and enlarged edition of Prof. Bain's 'Rhetoric and Composition' is in preparation by D. Appleton & Co. Sir J. William Dawson will prepare for the same firm a volume for the International Scientific Series on the subject of the development of plants in geological time.

—J. B. Lippincott Co. are about to publish, in connection with Adam and Charles Black, of Edinburgh, a new library edition of the Waverley Novels in twenty-five volumes.

—Theodore Roosevelt's 'Thomas H. Benton,' in the American Statesman Series, will appear to-day.

—Bret Harte's new book, which Houghton, Mifflin & Co. will publish immediately, contains two stories, 'A Millionaire of Rough-and-Ready' and 'Devil's Ford.' A volume of reminiscences of Salem life, by Mrs. Nathaniel Silsbee, Boston, is to be published shortly by the same firm. It is called 'A Half-Century in Salem.'

—An English reader of Mr. Morse's volume of 'Summer Haven Songs' has written to the author for permission to publish the poem 'Beauty,' which he has set to music.

—Herr Seidl's second 'symphonic soirée' at Steinway Hall will be given this (Saturday) evening, the soloists being Ovide Musin, the violinist, and Mme. Trebelli. The concert will open with Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and close with his Third Leonore Overture.

—*The Pall Mall Gazette* hears that a movement is on foot to obtain for Jean Ingelow, the poet and novelist, one of the annuities in the gift of the Crown for services to literature. Miss Ingelow was born in 1830.

—'Livre d'Amour' is the title of a selection of poems, made from the French by Mrs. Blanche Butterworth Haggin, of San Francisco, which Scribner & Welford have nearly ready. In making this selection Mrs. Haggin has had the great advantage offered by her husband's library, which is extraordinarily rich in French literature, particularly in the department of poetry. The book was printed and bound in San Francisco, and is a fine example of typography. It is issued in three editions, one on Watman paper, one on ordinary Japan paper, and one on 'grand Japan.'

—Mr. T. Wemyss Reid has resigned the editorship of the Leeds *Mercury* to become literary adviser to the house of Cassell & Co., London. He is known to American readers through his clever monograph on Charlotte Brontë.

—*The American Bookseller* will print on Feb. 1 a complete list of books published in this country in 1886.

—A novel entertainment will be given at the Academy of Music on Friday evening, Feb. 4th, its purpose being to illustrate the work of the Carlisle School and demonstrate the capacity of the Indian to receive education and industrial training. The program will consist of exercises by 100 students, representing thirty tribes, and will show boys and girls engaged in the various industries taught at the school; class recitations by Apache pupils only three months from their prison life at Fort Marion, Florida, as well as by classes from higher grades; and music by the school band and choir. Tickets may be obtained at Pond's music-store, Union Square.

—Of Miss Frances Willard's 'How to Win,' published by Funk & Wagnalls, Miss Frances Power Cobbe writes: 'It is crowded with wise counsels, administered so brightly and lightly that the recipients will infallibly swallow them like bon-bons.' She adds: 'I read with amazement and wonder of the enormous organization of the W. C. T. U. in America, and of which Miss Willard is President. With the labor of ten years I made a Society of about 1,000. The W. C. T. U. numbers 150,000.'

—Only 100 copies will be printed of the \$50 vellum-bound edition of 'The Book of the Tile Club.'—There will soon appear in England an unexpurgated series of 'The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists,' edited with notes by Mr. Swinburne, Mr. Gosse and others. The spelling will be modernized.

—Gilbert and Sullivan's new operetta, 'Ruddigore,' produced in London last Saturday night, does not seem to have made as great a hit as some of its recent predecessors.

—Ex-President White on Wednesday of last week endowed the Cornell University School of History and Political Science with his historical library—a collection of about 30,000 volumes, besides some 10,000 valuable pamphlets and many manuscripts. Its gathering has been his life's work, and it is said to have cost more than \$100,000. The Trustees have decided to name the new school in Mr. White's honor.

—Sir Henry Taylor's 'Philip van Artevelde' was recited by Mr. Sidney Woollett at the Madison Square Theatre last Monday morning. On Monday next 'King John' will be given.

—There is a bill before the Legislature providing for the enlargement of the Museum of Natural History in this city, and the provision of better facilities for public instruction there. Prof. Bickmore's lectures are delivered in a hall designed to seat only 275 persons, yet at the opening of this year's course 390 teachers were crowded into it, while 114 were unable to enter at all.

—There are published in the United States 14,160 newspapers and periodicals of all classes. Of these 700 are religious and denominational papers. About 600 are published in German and 42 in French.

—Gustav Amberg, manager of the Thalia Theatre, has leased Irving Hall, in Irving Place, for a period of twenty years, and proposes to fit it up as a first-class theatre with 2,200 seats and thirty boxes. The entrance will be in Fourteenth Street, next door to Steinway Hall. Mr. Amberg is backed by German capitalists, and takes this new step to oblige the better class of German theatre-goers, who object to going down town to see plays performed in their own language. He will continue to manage the Thalia Theatre, however, for down-town audiences.

—At the close of their last session, the officers and members of both the Senate and the Council of the Cherokee Nation sent to Mr. George E. Foster, author of 'Sequoyah, the American Cadmus,' an album containing their own signatures and that of Chief Bushyhead. Some of the autographs were in English and others in Cherokee.

—A contributor to *The Evening Post* has been hunting in *Notes and Queries* for the bones of Thomas Paine, which were dug up in this country by William Cobbett and taken to England for public burial. This, it seems, they never received; and in 1868 nothing more was known of their whereabouts, than that in the summer of 1849 they were lying in a box in the cellar of the house of 'Mr. John Chennell, corn-merchant, of Guildford, Surrey.'

—The titles of the six lectures on Woman in Literature prepared by the Rev. George W. Cooke, of West Dedham, Mass., for delivery before colleges, clubs or parlor gatherings, are as follows:—'The Learned Women of the Age of Elizabeth' (1550-1650), 'Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and the First English Women-of-Letters' (1650-1725), 'Dr. Johnson and the Blue-Stockings' (1725-1785), 'Sir Walter Scott and the Women Novelists' (1785-1815), 'Harriet Martineau and the Professional Literary Women' (1815-1850), and 'George Eliot and the Literary Women of To-Day' (1850-1885).



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The Free Parliament.

[Communications must be accompanied with the name and address of the correspondent, not necessarily for publication. Correspondents answering or referring to any question are requested to give the number of the question for convenience of reference.]

QUESTIONS.

No. 1227.—Can you give me all the alliterative lines, running through the alphabet, of which the following are the first four *vis.*:

An Austrian army, awfully arrayed,
Boldly, by battery, besieged Belgrade;
Cossacks commanding, cannonading come,
Dealing destruction's devastating doom?

RUTLAND, VT.

E. L. T.

No. 1228.—What London periodical like THE CRITIC is the best for independent criticism and literary news?

DENVER, COL.

T. A. W.

[*The Athenaeum* and *The Academy* are THE CRITIC's prototypes.]

No. 1229.—Will you please call to my assistance, through 'The Free Parliament,' your readers who may remember any poetical expression, by Western writers, of the idea of re-incarnation or pre-existence. It is a common Eastern theme, but seems to occur rarely in the works of European or American poets. I am in search of such poems as Wordsworth's 'Intimations of Immortality,' Paul H. Hayne's 'Pre-Existence,' Aldrich's 'Identity,' and Whittier's 'A Mystery.'

FRANKLIN SQUARE, NEW YORK.

E. D. W.

No. 1230.—In your notice (Dec. 25th) of Margaret J. Preston's 'For Love's Sake,' you speak of the author as 'Mrs.' Preston. Is this correct? NEWPORT, R. I.

V. W.

[It is quite correct. The poet, whose maiden name was Junkin, is the wife of Col. Preston, of Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Va.]

ANSWERS.

No. 1224.—Mrs. Elizabeth Lloyd Howells, of Philadelphia, was the author of the poem on Milton's blindness beginning 'I am old and blind.' The poem was included in one or two English editions of Milton's works, and I can well remember hearing it argued among literary people that it bore internal evidence of being his. Mrs. Howells was an intimate friend of Whittier, and one of his poems describes a drive taken with her at Princeton, Mass.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

T. W. H.

[The question is answered by S. B. P., of Flushing, L. I., also.]

Publications Received

RECEIPT of new publications is acknowledged in this column. Further notice of any work will depend upon its interest and importance. Where no address is given, the publication is issued in New York.

Allison, E. P., and Penrose, B. City Government of Philadelphia. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.
Arawiyah, A. Tales of the Caliph. London: Fisher Unwin.
Bishop, P. P. American Patriotism. 75c. Boston: Putnam's Sons.
Collar and Daniell. Latin Reddenda. \$1.10. Boston: Ginn & Co.
Cooke, R. T. Happy Dodd. \$1.50. Boston: Ticknor & Co.
Douglas, A. M. Foes of her Household. \$1.50. Boston: Lee & Shepard.
Fearing, L. B. The Sleeping World. \$1.00. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co.
Fenn, G. M. Devon Boys. 25c. Harper Bros.
Gladstone, W. E. The New Locksley Hall. 25c. Brentano Bros.
Goodell, T. D. The Greek in English. 75c. Henry Holt & Co.
Higginson, T. W. The Monarch of Dreams. 50c. Boston: Lee & Shepard.
Hopkins, D. P. Practical Pedagogy. \$1.50. Boston: Lee & Shepard.
Jewett, S. O. The Story of the Normans. \$1.50. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
Keeble, J. The Christian Year. 10c. Cassell & Co.
Rees, J. R. The Diversions of a Book-Worm. \$1.25. Geo. J. Combes.
Remsen, I. The Elements of Chemistry. 1.00. Henry Holt & Co.
Rollins, Alice Wellington. All Sorts of Children. Cassell & Co.
Roosevelt, T. Life of Thomas Hart Benton. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
Ruskin, J. Præterita. Vol. ii., Chaps. 5 and 8. 25c. each. John Wiley & Sons.
Skene, F. A Strange Inheritance. 25c. Harper & Bros.
Sons and Daughters. By the author of Margaret Kent. \$1.50. Boston: Ticknor & Co.
Stickney, J. H. A Second Reader. 50c. Boston: Ginn & Co.
Stillé, Chas. J. Beaumarchais and the Lost Million. Phila.: C. J. Stillé.
Tennynson, A. L. Locksley Hall Sixty Years After. 25c. Harper & Bros.
Towle, G. M. The Nation in a Nutshell. 50c. Boston: Lee & Shepard.
Towle, G. M. Young People's History of Ireland. \$1.50. Boston: Lee & Shepard.
Wilbraham, F. M. The Sere and Yellow Leaf. Macmillan & Co.

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